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The Urban Poor and the Economic Recovery

A Survey of Human Services in the Nation's Principal Cities

September 1984

United States Conference of Mayors

United States Conference of City Human Services Officials

THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS is the national organization of the mayors of the nation's principal cities -- those with populations of 30,000 or more. Through the Conference, mayors can discuss and adopt policy on pressing urban issues and receive information and technical assistance on developments affecting city government.

THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CITY HUMAN SERVICES OFFICIALS represents human services directors from cities across the country, provides information and assistance to its members and, with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, works to influence the development of public policy in Washington.

OMB WATCH is a research and action network concerned about fairness in government. Its primary purpose is to increase public understanding of how OMB actions affect nonprofit and community-based groups. It operates a Poverty Project.

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SUMMARY

To assess the status of human services in the nation's cities in 1984 the U. S. Conference of Mayors, the U.S. Conference of City Human Services Officials and OMB Watch surveyed city human services officials on: (1) the effect of the budding national economic reovery on individual cities and on the people served by city human service agencies; (2) the extent of poverty in cities; (3) emergency service needs and how well they are being met; (4) the ability of non-emergency human service programs to meet the demands placed on them; and (5) federal actions which could help to improve conditions in the cities. Officials in 83 cities of varying size from across the nation responded with information about the people and programs in their communities.

- The employment situation has improved in 61 percent of the cities answering the survey. All but 5 percent of these cities feel that the employment situation next year will remain the same, or possibly improve.

- Although the employment situation and the effects of the national recovery were felt to some extent in most of the cities responding to the survey, more than half of the cities feel that the recovery has not reached them or that poor people have not benefited from it.

- Four out of every five cities report that the number of poor people has increased since 1982. Only two of the cities report that poverty has decreased since 1982.

- The demand for emergency services -- food, shelter, income assistance, energy assistance, medical care -- has increased during 1984 in more than half of the cities surveyed and is expected to continue to increase during the next year, again in over half of the cities. Shelter and food assistance are cited far more frequently than income assistance, energy assistance and medical care as the emergency services most in demand.

- Unemployment, housing problems and the influx of new people, including transients, are identified most frequently as the causes for the increase in the demand for emergency services.

- On average, one-third of the demand for all emergency services is going unmet. Providing emergency shelter poses the most difficult problem for cities, with 48 percent of the demand not being met.

- Over the last year, three out of four of the cities responding saw an increase in utility cutoffs; nearly two out of three experienced increases in application for energy assistance; 81 percent saw increases in housing evictions.

- Nearly three out of every four cities responding report that the demand for human services other than emergency services has increased since 1982.

- The demand for other human services has increased in 1984 in more than half of the cities surveyed. The services cited most frequently as increasing in demand include senior services, child care, energy assistance, health, mental health, employment and training and youth services.

- Half the cities responding are unable to meet the demand for human services adequately.

- On average in the cities responding, 24 percent of the people eligible for human services are not receiving them. The level of unmet need is greatest for mental health, legal services and child care.

- Sixty percent of the responding city governments have been unable to increase funding for programs reduced by federal budget cuts.

- Job creation and training, permanent housing for low income and elderly people, services for homeless persons, and nutrition and food assistance lead the list of areas in which city human services officials call for federal action.

- In general, several themes which describe poverty in America's cities today emerge from the survey:

  * The economic recovery has been selective in terms of the people benefiting from it; overall, conditions for the poor have not improved and in many cases have worsened.

  * Many of those once considered the "new poor" have joined the chronically unemployed and have become more reliant on social services as a way of life.

  * There is a growing sense of hopelessness among those who have been unemployed for a long time; their unemployment benefits have run out; they have become discouraged workers, no longer included in official unemployment statistics.

  * Many workers have returned to low-paying, dead end jobs not equivalent to those they previously held.

  * The shortage of affordable housing for low income people -- a situation exacerbated by federal budget cuts -- appears central to the problems of the poor.

  * The quality of life has deteriorated for poor people as the various problems they face have led to homelessness, mental health problems, family dissolution, and increased alcohol and substance abuse.

INTRODUCTION

In October, 1982 the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the U.S. Conference of City Human Services Officials brought the shortage of emergency services -- food, shelter, medical care, income assistance, energy assistance -- to national attention through a survey examining the combined impact of federal budget cuts, poor economic conditions and high unemployment on people in cities. Information was provided by human services officials in 55 cities. The survey found that 78 percent of the cities identified shelter and 73 percent identified food as the emergency services most in demand. Across all of the cities submitting information, 57 percent of the overall demand for emergency services went unmet during FY82.

Since that time more than 15 mayors from across the nation have testified on behalf of the Conference of Mayors on the growing problems of hunger and homelessness in their cities. In September 1983, then Conference President Richard H. Fulton of Nashville appointed a 20 member Task Force on Joblessness and Hunger, chaired by New Orleans Mayor Ernest N. Morial, to spearhead the Conference's efforts to respond to the emergency services crisis in cities.

Over the past two years the Conference has gathered a significant body of data which shows that the demand for emergency services -- principally food, shelter, and energy assistance -- continues to grow, despite the fact that the employment situation in many cities has improved.

- Eight case studies, entitled Hunger in American Cities, were published in June, 1983. These showed that despite differing local economic conditions and rates of unemployment, all of the cities examined experienced a recent and significant increase in the demand for emergency food assistance, all had undertaken substantial local efforts to respond to these increases, but only three of the cities were able to meet the increased demand -- two of them just barely.

- Responses to Urban Hunger, published in October, 1983, described how communities across the country have pulled together both public and private resources to respond to the recent increased demand for emergency food assistance. The report also indicated that while local efforts have provided temporary relief to numerous city residents, they often did not serve all of the people in need, and the gap between the demand for assistance and local resources available to meet the demand was continuing to widen.

- A January, 1984 survey of the twenty cities whose mayors are on the Conference's Task Force on Joblessness and Hunger documented increases in emergency service needs during 1983. It projected that the demand would continue to grow during 1984 in 70 percent of the cities, even though the employment situation was improving in many of these same cities. Half of the cities estimated that local agencies were unable to meet the demand for food in 1983; 53 percent were unable to meet the demand for shelter; 80 percent were unable to meet the demand for energy assistance.

- Homelessness in America's Cities: Ten Case Studies was published in June, 1984. All of the cities examined experienced recent and significant increases in the demand for emergency shelter. All experienced a decrease in their unemployment rate, most at the same time that the demand for shelter was increasing; and all have undertaken substantial local efforts, involving both the public and private sectors, to respond to the increase in demand for shelter. Despite tight local budgets, all of the cities have used locally generated revenues as well as federal funds to respond to homelessness. Even with these efforts, there are many people on the streets without shelter in all ten cities. While four cities -- New York City, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City and San Francisco -- have policies of providing shelter to all who request it, the other six cities report a tremendous gap between the number of homeless people and the number they are able to shelter in the beds available.

- Also in June, 1984, the Conference published a survey, Housing Needs and Conditions in America's Cities, which indicated that the demand for low-income housing was so out of scale with available resources that over 60 percent of the cities surveyed have closed their waiting lists to households seeking assistance. And because the housing market was so tight, officials said, many people cannot use the assistance that is available: In over half of the 66 cities surveyed, 25 percent or more of the Section 8 Existing Housing Certificates are eventually cancelled because suitable housing units at acceptance rents cannot be found. The cities surveyed said the average wait for all forms of housing assistance was 20 months; in one city, families at the bottom of the current waiting list for Section 8 certificates can expect to wait 25 years.

Since the first survey was done two years ago, the national unemployment rate has declined and many indicators have suggested improvement in the economy. Yet the poverty rate

continued to increase during 1982 and 1983 and now stands at the highest level since 1965, with more than 35 million people in poverty in this nation. Labor Department data show that the percentage of unemployed persons receiving unemployment benefits fell to 29 percent in June 1984 -- the lowest percentage ever recorded in the history of the unemployment insurance program -- and that 6.1 million jobless workers were without unemployment benefits that month.

Since FY80, grants to state and local governments, after accounting for inflation, have been cut nearly in half. In cities across the country city employees have been laid off, public services cut back, and taxes and fees increased. The poor have felt the federal cuts more directly, more intensely. Recent studies done by agencies such as the Congressional Research Service, the Congressional Budget Office, and the General Accounting Office show that federal budget cuts and tax policies have hurt low income Americans.

The Conference of Mayors, the Conference of City Human Services Officials and OMB Watch undertook this survey to assess the current status of human services in the nations's cities. It is intended to provide data on the effect of a budding economic recovery on cities and on the people served by city human services agencies, on the extent of poverty in cities, on emergency services needs and how well they are being met, on the ability of human service programs other than emergency ones to meet the demand placed on them, and on federal actions which could help to improve conditions in cities.

Approach

In late July, 1984 a questionnaire was distributed to human services officials in cities throughout the United States. Responses were received during August and September from 83 cities in 27 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. These came from every region of the country; respondents range in population from 7,086,096 in New York City to 23,128 in Auburn (ME). See the Appendix for a list of the cities and selected information about them.

The questionnaire requested the following information:

1. Indicate how the employment situation has changed in your city during the last year?

   How would you characterize what the employment situation in your city looks like for the next year?

2. What emergency services are most in demand in your city?

   Since last year how has the demand for emergency services changed in your city?

What are some major causes for the increase, decrease, or stabilization in the demand for emergency services?

To what degree is the demand for emergency services unmet in your city?

What do you anticipate will happen to the demand for emergency services in your city during the next year?

3. How has the demand for <u>other</u> human services changed in your city since 1982?

   Have you been able to meet the demand adequately?

   Indicate how the demand for human service programs has changed in your city since 1983.

4. Indicate how the overall funding for human service programs has changed in your city since 1983.

   Has your city government been able to increase funding for any programs affected by federal budget cuts?

5. How many families in your city have been forced out of their homes because of a court order? What do you think has contributed most to the change?

   Are other factors forcing people out of their homes?

6. What were the number of utility cutoffs in 1982, 1983, and 1984 (projected)?

   Other than the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, is there an assistance fund run in conjunction with the utility companies?

7. How many people are applying for and receiving Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program grants?

8. Indicate the number of facilities providing emergency food assistance.

9. Indicate the number of emergency shelters and beds.

10. The federal poverty line is derived from 1955-56 data showing that an average family spent one-third of its after-tax income on food. Do you think low-income families spend more or less than one-third of their disposable income on food today?

    Do you think it is fair to base the definition of poverty solely on the cost of food?

Which is the most costly item low income families face?

11. Congress has instructed the Census Bureau to provide an estimate of the poverty rate when non-cash benefits are counted as income. The Administration strongly supports counting non-cash benefits as income. Do you think this is fair?

12. The poverty line for a family of four in 1983 was $10,200. Is this enough for a family of four to live on in your city? About how much is needed?

13. When the poverty line was calculated, it was based on after-tax, disposable income. However, when measuring poverty now, it is based on a family's income before taxes. Do you think this is fair?

    How do you think the tax burden on low income people has changed during the past few years?

14. Have there been any changes in the number of poor people in your city since 1982?

    What has happened to the new poor, the near poor, the working poor, the chronic poor, or other groups of poor people in your city since 1982?

    Describe the conditions faced by a real or hypothetical family or individual in poverty in your city.

15. Has the budding national economic recovery helped your city and the people you serve?

16. Describe specific actions the federal government could undertake to help improve conditions in your city.

This report has been analyzed and written to reflect the views of and trends among cities responding to the survey. Anecdotal statements and analyses by city officials have been included. Many topics were addressed in open-ended questions. For some questions city officials used estimates as opposed to actual data.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

In most of the cities responding to the survey, the employment situation improved during the past year and the effects of the national economic recovery have been felt to some extent. The information provided, however, clearly indicates a selective economic recovery that has generally benefited those who are not poor and excluded low-income people. Although officials responding to the survey report improved employment situations, they also describe increased poverty in their cities. More than half of the responding cities feel that the national economic recovery has not reached them or that the poor, elderly and disabled have not benefited from the recovery.

The Employment Situation

Fifty-one cities (62 percent) indicate that the employment situation has improved during the last year. Thirteen of these cities report that the employment situation has become "a lot better," the most positive answer cities could give. Cities reporting that the employment situation is a "lot better" include Auburn, Boulder, Dallas, Dade County, Greenwich, Nashville, Providence and Seattle. The remaining 38 cities describe the improvement as slight. One of these, Chicago, qualified its answer expressing "concern that (official unemployment statistics) do not include the number of persons who dropped-out of the work force, discouraged because they were unable to find work."

Conversely, 13 percent of the respondents feel the employment situation in their city has become worse during the past year. Only two cities indicate it has become "a lot worse." The remaining 25 percent of the cities indicate the employment situation has remained about the same during the past year.

In regard to the future, 30 cities responding to the question (37 percent) expect the employment situation to improve during the coming year. Twenty-five of these cities anticipate that the change will be "slight."

CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT SITUATION:
1984 and 1985 Projected
(percentage of cities responding)

Response	1984	1985
A lot Worse	2.4%	0%
Slightly Worse	11.0	8.5
About the Same	24.4	54.9
Slightly Better	46.3	30.5
A Lot Better	15.9	6.1

Ninety percent of the cities that report that the employment situation was worsening in 1984 feel conditions will continue to be bad or actually get worse in 1985. Ninety-four percent of the cities that report the employment situation improved during 1984, feel that things will continue to be good or get better next year. All of the cities reporting no changes in the employment situation during 1984 anticipate things will stay the same or get better in 1985; none feel things will get worse.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS
(percentage of cities responding)

	Better in 1984	Same in 1984	Worse in 1984
Better in 1985	41%	40%	10%
Same in 1985	53	60	50
Worse in 1985	5	-	40

Economic Recovery and the Poor

Human services officials were asked whether the budding economic recovery has helped their city and the people they serve. Seventy-three cities responded to this open-ended question, many giving detailed responses about the different clients they serve. The majority of the cities feel that there has been no economic recovery in their city or that the low income population has not benefitted from any economic recovery.

Improved Conditions

Sixteen of the respondents (22 percent) indicate that economic conditions have generally improved in their city and that the people they serve are, therefore, better off. San Antonio officials report that "the economic recovery has stimulated business growth, thereby creating jobs." Officials in Aurora indicate that "as the tax base increases and the private sector offers more goods, services and jobs benefit." In Hartford, "the (public assistance) caseloads peaked during July and August 1983 at 6,700 (and) have been declining slowly but steadily since then to about 6,000 in June 1984." In another Connecticut city, economic opportunities are reported to have "increased dramatically, especially for unskilled workers."

Some of the 16 cities in this group qualified their response. Highland Park officials, for example, state that the economic recovery has benefitted the city and the people they serve, except for the elderly. In a California city the recovery has helped families near poverty, but not the poorest families. "There are more people better off now, but the real poor have increased. Many of those just above poverty have dropped into poverty because of fixed incomes and higher cost of utilities, etc.," officials there indicate. Boston officials state:

> The budding economy has helped decrease the flow of people into poverty, and in some cases has eased the situation as more jobs have become available. However, many of those jobs are marginal, and barely bring the individual's or family's income above the poverty level. The lack of employment and training programs inhibits the rise of these people into better jobs. In some cases, those thrown out of work have now become the "structurally unemployed" as their skills are no longer needed in the economy. The housing crisis is even more acute, and the economy has done nothing to ease that problem. Fewer people can afford preventive medical care, and the evidence of people showing up at hospitals with acute conditions is on the increase.

Other cities where the economic recovery has been felt and where people served by human services agencies have benefitted by it, include Auburn (ME), New Rochelle, Portsmouth, Providence, and Tustin.

Slightly Improved Conditions

Another 12 percent of the respondents (16 percent) indicate that while there has been an economic recovery, its effects have been slight or marginal. San Leandro officials note that the recovery has "somewhat" helped the people they serve, as evidenced by a decrease in the demand for emergency food assistance and shelter in the past six months. While Minneapolis has benefited from a period of reduced unemployment, officials there

indicate that the city "still has many discouraged workers who have given up on being a part of the main economic system." Livermore reports that "some people -- a few -- have found jobs. A lot of the jobs, however, are part-time or very low paying." Among cities which indicate the effects of the economic recovery have not been significant are Arlington, Detroit, Jackson (MI), Jacksonville, and Los Angeles.

No Improvement for the Poor

Forty cities, 55 percent of those responding to the question, indicate people served by human service agencies have not benefited from any economic recovery -- even if they believe it has benefited their city. The cities in this group are evenly split between those reporting the national economic recovery has benefited their city and those reporting it has not.

The half that report some recent improvements state that the recovery has benefited mostly higher income groups and skilled workers, and that its effects have been offset by cuts in federal programs. As an official from Anaheim states, "the economic recovery may be budding but it is not providing fruit for those people truly in need of human services....The effect of a stronger national economy has had no appreciable impact on the poor in this city." Dade County reports: "The recovery has been felt in our construction, manufacturing, and service industries. However, those needing human services, such as elderly persons, children, youth, female heads of households and unskilled workers have not been affected." In Lexington, officials state: "The recovery has impacted our city and skilled laborers, but very rarely the clients served by the human services agencies." A Daly City official notes "the economic recovery is slow; it is happening at the top and trickling down too slowly. It is a sad joke for those I serve."

Some of these cities indicate that not only were economic conditions for the poor not improving as a result of the national economic recovery but they were generally getting worse. For example, in Melbourne "the economic recovery has in some cases helped the larger businesses, but has not been of much help to the smaller ones. Some low income people have benefitted from 'trickle down' economics by obtaining new jobs, but these jobs are too often at minimum wage or part-time. The 'chronic poor' and many low and moderate income people are worse off than they were previously." In Grand Rapids, officials believe that "the recovery has helped the city, the upper and upper-middle classes, while the poor are getting poorer." Norwalk (CA) officials state that there "have been some signs that some people are finding employment, but still, others are...more under the influence of their poverty as unemployment benefits expire."

The other half of the 40 cities report that neither their city nor the people they serve have benefited from the budding national economic recovery; in some cases they specifically state

that poor people are now worse off. Responding to the survey question, an official from a Midwestern city said: "What budding economic recovery? The number of poor people in our community has increased." Trenton reports that "the economic recovery has yet to reach the city and only serves to highlight the discrepancies that exist between the segregated urban and suburban communities." Officials from another northeastern city state that the recovery has not had an impact on the city or on the poor and note they are seeing "a rise in the new poor population and persons 18 to 29 years of age who have no work history."

Seattle officials say they have not seen reduced caseloads for public assistance or other social programs. They cite a recent survey conducted by a local newspaper which found that "a majority of people feel that while the nation and its economy are better off now than they were four years ago, they themselves were in worse financial shape. Chicago quotes a number of factors to explain why the economic recovery has not helped the city or the people served by human services agencies:

- "Unemployment rates have not fallen locally as rapidly or as much as nationally.
- Decreases in the labor force may indicate that the decline in unemployment may reflect the long-term or hard-core unemployed giving up and dropping out of the labor force.
- Hard-core, unemployed persons without skills and/or with young children to care for, face employment difficulties in hard times and good times.
- Local plants closed during the recession are not being re-opened.
- Smokestack industries do not seem to benefit from the "recovery" as much as the minimum-wage-paying service sector.
- Many former employees of smokestack industries are now underemployed, working for little pay in the service sector."

Miscellaneous Responses

Another five of the 73 responding cities gave responses which do not fit neatly into the categories described in this chapter. Thornton officials state that "in general, the city did not feel the recession very long since the area has not been tied

to industrial production. Currently a building and construction boom seems to be peaking out." Officials in Scottsdale report "our city and populace are in good shape for the most part. The problem is that many low-income and low-skill level people are trying to relocate here and find few entry level jobs, high rents, high utilities, limited transportation and high medical costs."

POVERTY

More than four out of five cities responding state that poverty has been increasing since 1982. Only two cities, Thornton and Providence, indicate there has been a decrease in the number of poor people since 1982. Nine cities feel there has been little or no change in the number of poor people since 1982.

Although a few city officials indicate the poor do not face significant problems, most painted a bleak picture. It is a picture that shows the new poor "more reliant on social services as a way of life in order to make ends meet" according to San Antonio. Wichita adds "their situation has (become) more desperate -- (and) the chronic poor sink further and further into hopelessness."

Even more striking is that many of the new poor have now become part of the chronic unemployment problem in cities. As Tacoma officials say, they "have remained in the community and become the invisible poor." These "invisible poor" have exhausted many of their benefit programs and, according to one Midwestern city, have been "living month to month" with any unusual expense such as a car breaking down "pushing them into bankruptcy." And one California city added that they "feel isolated, hopeless and angry." Even so, as Highland Park officials note, the "moderate/high income people would pretend they do not exist."

Improvements for the Poor

Five respondents, however, give a more optimistic view of conditions faced by poor people in their cities:

- Things in San Diego are "relatively better than the conditions faced by individuals and families in more economically depressed areas of the country." City officials feel the poor are "receiving appropriate services" and are now focusing on services for the homeless, many of whom came to the city looking for jobs.

- In Aurora (CO) the poor have been "juggling with available finances" and using public agencies for aid when there is a problem. Nevertheless, the number of working poor continues to increase.

- The poor in Thornton are "better off than poor people in most places." While there are migrant farmworkers and undocumented aliens nearby, they "do not place a heavy burden on the city." Most of the "young poor

residents are in subsidized housing units that are in fairly good shape." Some "blue-collar type industrial workers" try to relocate in Thornton, but when there are no jobs they are "forced to move on."

- The number of poor are starting to decrease in Auburn. City officials acknowledge the poor "face tough times, but most people can get assistance to meet basic necessities."

- In Providence "a strong willed, ambitious family can live relatively comfortable [sic] if they seek some type of employment." The improved economy has helped decrease the number of poor. For those most in need, charitable organizations exist to "fill in the gaps."

The Problems of Poverty

Despite these improvements, many of the officials describe situations where incomes have not kept pace with costs of basic necessities. According to Berkeley officials, by the end of the month the family "is without food; bills are past overdue; water and gas have been cut off; kids are without diapers and formula; and (there is) no money for transportation."

San Francisco points out that an average AFDC family of three receives $555 per month. But average food ($175) and rent ($350) cost $525 per month. The family must use the remaining $30 for "utilities, transportation and clothing costs. If MediCal was not provided, the family would be unable to afford it."

Portland (ME) relates that an average AFDC family of two receives $256 per month "to cover all expenses." But "rents in Portland start at $300 a month for decent housing."

In one eastern city a woman on AFDC with two children receives $313 in cash assistance and $189 in food stamps. The rent is $290 per month for a "tiny depreciated two bedroom dwelling" and utility bills are $100 per month using "a conservative estimate -- because she is paying off accumulated bills of winter." Without adding in other expenses, the family is already $77 in the red. "Her daily experience is that of scraping, stretching, and begging to keep her children sheltered, warm and fed. For herself, she holds hope for a job but without money for transportation and one 'good' interview dress, finding a job that will help her become self-sufficient is next to impossible."

According to Wichita officials "there is no incentive program for the working poor because the wages they earn do not change their living conditions." They describe a typical working poor family of four as having an income of $4.00 to $5.00 per hour, working for 40 hours each week. After taxes are taken out

they must pay rent of $250-$300 per month and utilities of $150-$250 per month. They must also pay for food and other expenses. The family often has an "old automobile, high repair rates, low gas mileage. With no medical insurance, they are facing a deadly condition."

Housing Problems

More than seven of every 10 responding cities indicate that the poor face serious housing problems. Several cities describe long waiting lists for subsidized housing. In Lexington there is a six month waiting list; in an Indiana city there are 502 people wait-listed for Section 8 housing; Boston indicates there is "a tighter housing market," and in a Florida city there is a shortage of two, three and four bedroom rental units.

Several cities add that substandard housing and high rental costs have made housing problems even worse. In one Florida City, elderly and non-English speaking poor have been living in substandard housing. The City's Code Enforcement Division has condemned many of these dwellings forcing the families to relocate. Detroit, the District of Columbia, and Lexington (KY) are among other cities citing poor housing conditions. But Lexington points out it is very difficult to move to better housing because many privately owned subsidized units require three credit references.

A California city describes low-income families with Section 8 vouchers that cannot "find a landlord to rent to them in the required time." According to a city in Connecticut, "landlords refuse welfare recipients, or HUD subsidy, or demand too much money on deposit." The high rents have contributed to a low income housing vacancy rate of 1.6 percent in New York City where the city houses over 2,940 families in emergency shelters. Some other cities citing unaffordable housing include West Covina, Greenwich, Tustin, Rockville and Anchorage. Housing costs in New Orleans "have increased significantly. People now have less disposable income -- most of their income goes for housing." And in Boulder there is "almost no affordable housing -- that is not subsidized."

Sixty-six percent of the cities providing information about housing evictions say that they have seen an increase during each of the past three years. Ten percent of the respondents report that evictions have consistently gone down for each year since 1982. The remaining 24 percent of the cities state the numbers have stayed about the same for each of the three years. Over the last year alone, 81 percent of the responding cities report housing evictions have increased; six percent report evictions decreasing; and 13 percent report the number of evictions has not changed since 1983.

HOUSING EVICTIONS
(percentage of cities responding)

	1982-83	1983-84
Up	69.4%	81.3%
Same	11.1	12.5
Down	19.4	6.3

Energy Problems

Sixty-five percent of the cities providing information on utility cutoffs say that the number has increased every year since 1982. It decreased every year according to 20 percent of the respondents; for 15 percent of the cities, it remained the same for all three years. During this last year alone, however, three-fourths of the responding cities state that utility cutoffs have gone up. Thirteen percent of the respondents report that cutoffs have decreased during 1984; another 13 percent report cutoffs remained the same as last year.

UTILITY CUTOFFS
(percentage of cities responding)

	1982-83	1983-84
Up	50.0%	74.2%
Same	16.7	12.9
Down	33.3	12.9

Eighty percent of the cities responding report that the number of applications for energy assistance increased during each of the last three years. The remaining 20 percent say applications were steadily decreasing during each of the three years.

During the last year, 63 percent of the responding cities report that applications for energy assistance increased. Slightly more than one-third of responding cities said the number of applications was decreasing.

APPLICATIONS FOR LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
(percentage of cities responding)

	1982-83	1983-84
Up	56.4	62.9
Same	5.1	2.9
Down	38.5	34.3

Other Problems

Other problems poor people face which were commonly mentioned include: inadequate diets, poor transportation services, lack of day care, and unattended medical problems. For example, a poor family in Detroit faces: "minimal nutrition, neglected health, no meaningful employment prospects, poorly lit and ill-heated housing of marginal standard." In Chicago, even with government benefits, a poor family may need: "emergency food, child care, employment training, health care, housing and energy assistance."

In Scottsdale, a poor family faces a "poor diet, limited medical care, no transportation, few entry level jobs, high rent and energy costs, and quick evictions." In Lexington and Boston, energy assistance is not adequate enough to help poor families through the winter months. In Houston, one of the greatest problems poor people face is lack of adequate transportation: "The bus lines often do not reach the poor or reach where they may need to go to seek employment or acquire services."

These problems have resulted in more homelessness in Boston, mental health problems in Daly City, relocation problems in a Florida city and Arlington (MA), family dissolution in some cities, such as Portsmouth, and increases in alcohol and substance abuse in places such as Milwaukee and Boston. As Milwaukee officials state, the "quality of life deteriorated" for poor people.

Case Histories

The conditions faced by a poor family can best be understood through case histories. Below are seven case histories describing problems of the new poor, the chronic poor, and the working poor. Some of the case histories are composite stories told by the cities; others are actual cases.

New Poor -- Elderly

An elderly woman living in Grand Rapids was given notice of a rent increase on her apartment. The notification also said

she would be responsible for utility bills which previously had been included in the rent. The woman made a tremendous effort to pay her new rent and utility bills on her fixed income. She began to eat only what she could get for free at senior centers or from surplus food programs. She also stopped buying medication for her diabetes because she could not afford it and did not qualify for Medicaid.

After a while, a complaint was made to the local housing authority about her housekeeping. The housing authority issued her a severe warning. Conditions did not improve and neighbors contacted the Adult Protective Services Office, which determined she was "incompetent" because of poor nutrition and failure to maintain appropriate medication. As a result she was placed under guardianship of the court and quickly moved to a nursing home. She lost many of her legal rights as an adult and her estate to the court.

New Poor -- Disabled

Mr. and Mrs. Lopez and their two children live in Norwalk. Mr. Lopez became disabled about a year ago. For several months he drew State Disability benefits, but they have now terminated and he has applied for Social Security Disability.

The State disability payments were not enough to pay the rent that was being charged and the family was evicted. For the past three months they have been living in one room in a motel and have not had enough money to move. They have received some help with food and motel payments from the Salvation Army and FEMA, but are truly living a hand to mouth existance.

New Poor -- Family

A family came to the Human Resources Center in a Southwestern city and stated they were being evicted from their home. They were to be evicted in three days by the landlord because the rent was not paid the day before, when it was due.

The husband lost his job two months before because he had a seizure while at work. The family has had no income since that date. The husband claims he is looking for work every day but keeps having seizures. He can't go to a doctor because he has no money.

The family can receive four food boxes in a six-month period. But there are waiting periods for food stamps, income maintenance payments, and medical care. The family is confused as to how or where to go to obtain these services.

Working Poor

A 30 year old black mother with five children (ages 14, 13, 12, 10, and 7), who is divorced, applied in March 1984

for assistance with their clothing needs. She receives no child support from her ex-husband.

She took a part-time job in a fast food restaurant in December, but her working hours are irregular and her earnings vary from $5 to $80 a month. Nevertheless, her AFDC grant was reduced from $209 to $139 a month and her food stamp allotment from $325 to $278 a month. At the same time, her rent in a public housing project has been increased from $21 to $59 a month. She hopes to be enrolled in a JTPA training program this fall. If enrolled, she could qualify for child care payments, transportation, and meal allowances, but not for stipends.

Working Poor

In a California city a father of seven works forty hours a week at minimum wage. His gross monthly income is $660. He is not eligible for welfare even though he is unable to provide for his family on such limited wages. His wife suffers severe medical problems, but does not receive any MediCal to pay medical costs. Their 14 year old daughter also has medical problems and receives MediCal. However, her MediCal covers medical care costs, not medicine, which runs around $140 each month. The family has recently been forced to leave their home due to a rent increase.

Chronic Poor

In a Southwestern city a family with six children under the age of 18 went through a divorce. The mother and children live on welfare. The father could not get a job and left the city. A small apartment was provided rent-free, but the family had to pay utility bills. Both gas and water have been cut off because of delinquent payments. The children aren't able to bathe because of the lack of water and are shunned in school because they smell. A church sponsored one of the boys, a teenager, for the Boy Scouts, but he had inadequate equipment and could not participate. When donated equipment was given to him, his mother hocked it to buy other necessities such as clothing. One of the other children has started making self-destructive comments. All are "falling through the so-called safety net."

Chronic Poor

A family of seven lives in a three-bedroom apartment in Dade County. The mother is the head of the household and has five children -- ages four and one-half through 16. The 14 year old girl has a daughter of 18 months. The family receives AFDC and food stamps. The mother does not work although she has wanted to in past years. She used to have hopes of upward mobility, but as the years pass she has resigned herself to accept her economic position.

The area in which the family lives has many negative role models. Three of her children have had brushes with the law. The neighborhood has many abandoned buildings and garbage-piled lots. There is no park or recreation area within walking distance, so vacant lots become castles or battlefields during play.

POVERTY DEFINITIONS

In November, 1983 the Director of the Office of Management and Budget testified before Congress that the number of poor people would drop by as much as 50 percent if non-cash government benefits, such as food stamps, housing assistance or Medicaid were counted as income. Currently, poverty status is based solely on cash income such as wages, welfare (AFDC), and alimony payments.

The testimony once again brought to the surface many of the issues surrounding the way poverty is defined and who is considered poor. The poverty definition has not changed substantially since it was first created in the early 1960s. The definition is based on what the average family in 1955 and 1956 spent for food after taxes were taken out. It turned out that the average family spent about one-third of its income on food so the poverty line was set at three times the cost of the government's cheapest food plan. Since 1969, the figure has been adjusted annually by changes in the Consumer Price Index.

With near unanimity, responding city officials critized this definition of poverty. In 1983 the poverty line for a family of four was set at $10,200 ($850/month). Only four cities feel that level is adequate for a family of four to live on; the other 75 cities (95 percent) feel the poverty line is inadequate.

City officials feel on average that at least $15,393 is needed for a family of four, with responses ranging from $11,000 to $26,000. Some of the cities indicate that their response is based on net income (after taxes) as opposed to gross income (before taxes).

Most cities have based their figures either on a percentage of median income, actual costs that families face, or on the Bureau of Labor Statistics lower level budget for a family of four in their area. For example, Anchorage indicates that the median income in the city is $31,000, but that a family of four could get by on $24,000. Daly City states that the minimum per month expenditures for a family of four would be as follows: rent (2 bedroom), $700; food, $200; medical expenses/insurance, $25-$40; transportation, $30+; energy costs, $30+; clothing, $25+; and miscellaneous, $100. Chicago and New York City used the BLS lower level Urban Family Budget from 1981 (the last one published) and adjusted it for inflation.

Three-fourths of the cities indicate that housing is the most costly item low income families face, followed by energy costs, food costs, and then medical costs. All but three cities (96 percent) feel it is unfair to base the poverty line solely on the cost of food, which is the current practice.

City officials also voice strong feelings about whether a family's income should be counted before or after taxes when determining if they are poor. Nearly nine out of ten cities (84 percent) feel it is unfair to determine poverty on income before taxes, which is the current government practice.

Seventy-nine percent of the cities feel this practice is unfair because the tax burden on poor people has increased during the past few years. However, 13 percent of the cities feel there has been no appreciable change in the tax burden on the poor. Eight percent believe the tax burden on the poor has actually decreased during the past few years.

On the specific issue which started the debate about the poverty definition -- whether non-cash benefits should be counted as income -- 63 percent of the cities feel it is unfair to count non-cash benefits as income. San Antonio states that "the intent of including non-cash benefits is to artifically inflate family income in order to raise people out of the poverty level (which) ...would result in an inaccurate portrayal of economic conditions." Minneapolis concurs, calling it "an accounting trick." Detroit adds that counting non-cash benefits would create "a Catch-22 situation for poor people -- more means less!"

Dallas believes it is fair to count non-cash benefits as income because if the "benefit-receiving family had the cash, they would spend it on the items for which they are receiving non-cash benefits." Portsmouth, Providence and Richland are three other cities which feel that non-cash benefits are given for basic necessities that people would have to spend money for and, therefore, should be counted as income.

Seattle points out, however, that benefits such as "tuition tax credits, home ownership and business interest write offs, etc. are not included in computing the income levels of the middle and upper class." They imply that until non-cash benefits are counted for all people, it is unfair to count non-cash benefits just for the poor.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The demand for emergency services -- food, shelter, energy assistance, income assistance medical assistance -- has increased during 1984 in more than half of the cities surveyed and is expected to continue to increase during the next year, again in over half of the cities. Officials responding to the survey indicate that shelter and food assistance are most in demand. Cities are having difficulty in meeting the demand for all emergency services. On average, city officials state that one-third of the demand goes unmet.

Demand for Emergency Services in 1984

Nearly three out of every four cities responding report that the demand for food assistance and shelter has increased this year. Sharp increases in the demand for shelter are more widespread, as 28 percent of the cities responding indicate there have been major increases; 19 percent report there have been major increases in the demand for food assistance. Included among those cities citing major increases in the demand for shelter are Anaheim, Anchorage, Berkeley, Columbia (MO), Daly City, Livermore, Los Angeles, Medford, Melbourne, Nashville, New York City, Portland (ME), Riverside, Rockville, San Francisco, San Mateo, Seattle, and Tucson. Just over 20 percent of the cities say the demand for shelter remained the same this year, including Dade County, Evansville, Jacksonville, San Diego and Tustin. Less than ten percent say it decreased, with Auburn, Providence, and San Leandro among them.

Cities citing a major increase in the demand for food assistance this year include Berkeley, Greenwich, Livermore, New Orleans, San Francisco, San Mateo, Scottsdale, and Seattle. Dade County, Evansville, New York City, San Diego and Tustin are among the 20 percent that indicate that the demand for food assistance has remained the same. Auburn and Providence indicate that it has decreased.

The table below shows the percent of cities reporting changes in the demand for emergency services during 1984.

CHANGES IN DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES DURING 1984
(percent of cities responding)

	Increased	Same	Decreased
Energy Assistance	51.9%	44.3%	3.8%
Food Assistance	73.2	19.5	7.3
Income Assistance	58.2	32.9	8.9
Medical Assistance	51.9	43.0	5.1
Shelter	71.3	20.3	7.6

City officials rank shelter and food assistance considerably ahead of other emergency services as being most in demand. Emergency services listed in rank order by degree of demand are shelter, food assistnce, income assistance, energy assistance and medical services. Other emergency services mentioned include transportation, mental health, special services to the homeless, legal services, employment and training, rental assistance and clothing.

Reasons for Changes in the Demand

Officials in a number of cities, particularly from the West and Southwest attribute the increase in the demand for emergency services to the migration of new people to their city. Scottsdale cites the multiple problems of more people moving to the sunbelt without confirmed jobs, the availability of few entry level jobs, high rents, and illnesses not covered by medical insurance. Seattle officials note the "migration from states with even poorer economies." San Diego comments on an "influx of transient/homeless families and individuals." Los Angeles cites "increased numbers of economically displaced individuals (or 'the new homeless') who have come to L.A. seeking employment only to experience failure." Houston identifies the "increase in the population through in-migration." Tucson cites the growing Sunbelt attraction for all and the increasing transient load." Dallas officials state that the influx of new residents presumably attracted by economic opportunity, has increased the demand for emergency shelter."

Several cities have identified the fact that many unemployed people are no longer eligible for unemployment benefits as a particular problem and cause of the increased demand for emergency services. Seattle officials indicate that "only 23 percent of the unemployed persons have unemployment benefits; down from 75 percent in previous years." In Richland "many citizens who were able to draw unemployment benefits have exhausted those benefits. Demands have doubled according to (the) Salvation Army." In Detroit "only about one in five of those unemployed are receiving benefits, as compared to five in

six a few years ago." Detroit officials also point out that "the population on public assistance in Detroit has increased this year and still is more than one-third of our total population." San Francisco officials report that the termination of unemployment benefits has forced many families to rely on emergency food assistance. Similarly, Chicago officials state that "as families exhaust unemployment benefits and savings are depleted they must turn for emergency help."

Anchorage officials cite several reasons for the increased demand for emergency services, including a 35 percent increase in the population in the last two years, seasonal labor situations, movement from rural centers to an urban area, and that their city is a central location for many supportive services. Multiple causes are also identified by San Antonio, including "increased costs for energy, (a) rapidly expanding population, unstable employment, low wages, increased costs for rent, (and) limited public housing and other low income housing." Boston officials state that the major "increases in food, income, and shelter services show Boston's continuing high rate of homeless people, continuing high unemployment in some city neighborhoods, arson, Asian immigrants and federal cutbacks." Dade County cites the "increase in (the) number of people affected by long-lasting economic hardships; (the) end of refugee assistance;...and continued deinstitutionalization."

A significant number of other cities cite employment problems as a cause of the increased demand for emergency services. Melbourne attributes it to the "growing numbers of low-income citizens who are underemployed and working at minimum wage jobs." Tucson reports that "the ailing copper industry (is) laying off longtime workers who have a hard time" being retrained. Other cities citing employment problems or high unemployment include Jackson (MI), Milwaukee, New Orleans, New York, San Mateo and Tacoma.

Problems relating to shelter costs have been identified by a significant number of cities. High energy costs are cited by Hartford, La Mirada, Lexington (KY), Nashville, and New Orleans. The lack of housing available to low income people is identified as a cause of the increased demand for emergency services by Daly City, Greenwich, Hartford, Medford, New York City Norwalk (CA), Portland (ME) and Riverside. Two cities, Dallas and New York City specifically mention the increasing numbers of evictions.

San Francisco officials cite a number of federal program policies as causes for the increased demand for emergency services. These include:

- "implementation of stringent documentation requirements in several food programs (which) has caused many needy people to stop participating, i.e. school meals and child care food programs;"

- "food stamp benefits...insufficient to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet;"

- "an increase in undocumented refugees/immigrants who are unable (because of their immigration status) to participate in federal food assistance programs;"

- "federal policy on disabled SSI recipients."

Melbourne officials identify another aspect of this problem: the nsufficient number of food stamp caseworkers employed by the state. Berkeley officials state that "the increase is directly related to the cuts in social services, public assistance programs,...SSI and MediCal and (the) lack of low-income housing." Evansville, Greenwich, Lexington (KY), Nashville, and New York City all cite federal budget cuts as a cause of the increase in the demand for emergency services. The chart on the following page shows the varied reasons given by city officials for the increase in the demand for emergency services during 1984 and the frequency with which they were mentioned.

Thirteen cities cite improvement in local conditions as a reason for decreased demand for emergency services:

- Nine of these cities cite a better economy and lower unemployment.

- Three indicate that there have been increases in state support for programs.

- One city cites the effectiveness of the weatherization program.

Aurora indicates that the demand for emergency services has remained about the same in the last year because more jobs have become available and more people are working. Minneapolis cites improved economic conditions and a significant decrease in unemployment as reasons for the demand for emergency services remaining about the same since last year. Minneapolis officials also indicate that eligibility for state general assistance has changed to include a wider population and a state program for emergency employment was started. Providence indicates that it has seen a decrease in the demand for emergency services since last year which can be attributed to better economic conditions.

REASONS FOR THE INCREASED DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES (SINCE 1983)

NOTE: Fifty-five cities (80% of the respondents) report increases in the demand for emergency services, giving 178 reasons for the increases. The reasons listed below illustrate the variety of situations that can impact a city. The number in parenthesis is the number of cities giving response.

POPULATION SHIFTS

Influx of new people (11)
Transients (8)
Homeless (7)
Family issues (single parent; abuse; etc.) (6)
Deinstitutionalization (6)
Elderly increases (3)
Illegal aliens; ineligibles (3)
Black/Hispanic increases (2)

RISING COST OF LIVING

Housing, gentrification, evictions (16)
Lack of affordable low-income housing (10)
Utilities, energy costs (9)
Medical (increases in loss of insurance) (4)
Food (1)
Unspecified cost of living increases (3)

FEDERAL CUTBACKS/POLICY CHANGES

Food stamp/commodities changes (7)
AFDC changes (e.g., cuts to working poor) (5)
SSI, Social Security Disability Insurance (4)
Medicaid changes (4)
Legal issues (2)
Alcohol, drug abuse, mental health changes (2)
Refugee assistance changes (2)
Unspecified (12)

ECONOMY

Continuing unemployment/no recovery (20)
Long-term unemployment/lack of retraining/ exhaustion of Unemployment Insurance Benefits (12)
Unstable, minimum wage jobs (3)

STATE CUTBACKS/POLICY CHANGES (5)

GREATER PUBLIC AWARENESS OF SERVICES (11)

Unmet Demand

Officials from the responding cities estimate on average that 33 percent of the demand for all emergency services is going unmet. The average percentage estimate of unmet demand for the different categories of emergency services is:

- Energy Assistance 24.0 percent
- Food Assistance 25.1 percent
- Income Assistance 33.2 percent
- Medical Servcies 31.9 percent
- Shelter 48.4 percent

Cities indicating that 50 percent or more of the demand for a specific emergency service is not being met include:

- Energy Assistance -- Anaheim, New Rochelle, San Mateo and Tustin.
- Food Assistance -- Anaheim, Downers Grove, New Rochelle, and West Covina
- Income Assistance -- Anaheim, Auburn, Downers Grove, Jacksonville and West Covina.
- Medical Assistance -- Anaheim, Auburn, Livermore, and San Francisco.
- Shelter -- Anaheim, Daly City, Livermore, San Mateo, Seattle, Tucson, Tustin, and West Covina.

Cities indicating that five percent or less of the demand is going unmet for the various emergency services include:

- Energy Assistance -- Downers Grove, Highland Park, Jacksonville, San Diego, San Francisco and Thornton;
- Food Assistance -- Arlington (MA), Highland Park, Jacksonville, New York City, San Mateo, and Scottsdale;
- Income Assistance -- Milwaukee, New York, San Diego, San Francisco and Tacoma;
- Medical Assistance -- Downers Grove, Highland Park, Milwaukee, New York City Rockville, San Antonio and Thornton;
- Shelter -- Arlington (MA), Highland Park, New York City San Francisco and Thornton.

On average, nearly half of the cities estimate that more than 20 percent of the demand for emergency services is going unmet. The table below shows the number of cities estimating the percent of unmet demand, divided into four categories:

UNMET DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES
(Number of Cities)

	No Unmet Demand	Less than 20 Percent Unmet	20-49 Percent Unmet	More than 50 Percent Unmet
Energy Assistance	5	23	15	8
Food Assistance	6	22	18	8
Income Assistance	4	15	14	13
Medical Services	5	22	12	10
Shelter	3	12	17	24

Nevertheless, the number of facilities providing emergency food assistance increased by 40 percent between 1982 and 1983 in the responding cities. The number of meals served increased by more than one-half, or 52 percent, in these cities. In 30 percent of these cities, the number of meals served increased by 50 percent or more. Boston saw a 200 percent increase, Chicago a 182 percent increase, and Dallas more than a 100 percent increase. From 1983 to 1984 the number of facilities providing emergency food assistance increased by another 15 percent.

The number of facilities providing emergency shelter in the responding cities increased by 54 percent from 1982 to 1983. The number of shelter beds increased by 47 percent during the same time period. The number of people served increased by an average of 71 percent from 1982 to 1983. In 21 percent of these cities the increase was by 50 percent or more. From 1983 to 1984 the number of shelters in the responding cities increased by one percent. The number of shelter beds increased by 10 percent during this same period, however.

Expected Demand for Emergency Services in 1985

Officials in over half of the responding cities expect that the demand for every category of emergency service will continue to increase during 1985. Shelter leads the projections for next year, with 70 percent of the cities expecting an increase in demand. Listed below are some of the cities expecting an increased demand for shelter next year:

Anaheim	Hartford	Norwalk (CA)
Anchorage	Highland Park	Portland (ME)
Arlington (MA)	Houston	Riverside
Aurora	Los Angeles	Rockville
Berkeley	Livermore	San Antonio
Boulder	Medford	San Francisco
Boston	Melbourne	San Mateo
Columbia	Milwaukee	Scottsdale
Dallas	Nashville	Seattle
Daly City	New Orleans	Tacoma (WA)
Grand Rapids	New Rochelle	Tucson
Greenwich	New York City	West Covina
		Wichita

The table below shows the percentage of the responding cities that anticipate the demand for emergency services during 1985 will increase, stay the same, or decrease. In every category of emergency services more cities expect the demand to increase than to stay the same.

CHANGE IN DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES
1985 PROJECTIONS
(percentage of cities)

	Increase	Stay the Same	Decrease
Energy Assistance	58.2%	38.0%	3.8%
Food Assistance	53.8	42.5	3.8
Income Assistance	53.8	39.7	6.4
Medical Services	56.3	38.8	5.0
Shelter	71.3	25.0	3.8

In explaining why a major increase is expected in the demand for most emergency services, Berkeley officials state that "the demand for services will continue to increase, as nothing indicates that the economic situation will change for the poor and near poor." Portsmouth officials suggest that the "demand for most services will continue to increase as money available will not buy as much." San Antonio officials report that the "costs for basic necessities, especially energy and housing, are increasing at a higher rate than income for low income families." San Francisco officials express concern that pending state legislation would greatly reduce grant levels and the ability of local government to assist in providing (a) standard for adequate survival of (the) dependent population." Tucson expects that "layoffs of many local copper miners and related workers will, along with normal growth, push up demands, especially for food, income and shelter." Tacoma (WA) expects that seniors will be

affected because of (a) new hospital reimbursement process for their costs that will cause seniors to leave the hospitals sooner, but...still (be in) need (of) care." Aurora, Daly City, Detroit and Grand Rapids all expect fuel costs to increase. Aurora is also concerned about increased demand for shelter if the winter is severe. New York City expects a 20.6 percent increase in shelter services for single adults and possibly as much as a 24 percent increase in services for homeless families. Income assistance and energy assistance are expected to increase by at least six percent each, medical assistance by between six and nine percent.

Providence officials, who expect a decrease in demand for all emergency services state that "as unemployment has decreased, the need for these services has decreased."

HUMAN SERVICES

Nearly three out of every four cities responding, (73 percent) report that the demand for human services other than emergency ones has increased since 1982. Six cities have seen a major increase. One-fourth of the cities, report the demand has stayed the same. Two cities report a decrease; none a major decrease. A list of the human service programs included can be found in charts in this chapter.

Just over one-half of the cities (53.7 percent) responding indicate that they are not able to meet the demand for human services; forty-seven percent report they are able to meet the demand, some with qualifications, however. La Mirada has been able to meet the increase in demand in all areas except senior services. Medford has been able to meet the increased demand only through special grants and private resources. In Scottsdale the increased demand has been met in most cases through community support and non-profit organizations. Milwaukee and Portland (ME) have both been able to meet the increased demand, but officials there report more competition for services, longer delays in receiving services, and services provided for shorter periods of time. Anchorage has been required to establish a priority list to be able to respond to the most critical needs of the community adequately.

Unmet Demand

On average, cities responding to the survey report that 24 percent of the people eligible for services are not receiving them. Mental health services, legal services and child care lead all programs in the percentage of people not being served. The following table lists the degree to which responding cities feel eligible recipients are not being served.

UNMET DEMAND FOR SERVICES
(percentage of cities responding)

Mental Health	31.1%
Legal Services	29.9
Day Care	28.6
Employment & Training	28.5
Refugee Assistance	25.0
Energy Assistance	24.7
Disability Programs	22.0
Weatherization	21.5
Youth Programs	20.5
Health	20.4
Income Maintenance	18.6
Recreation	18.4
Senior Services	18.3

In commenting on their inability to meet the increase in demand, San Francisco officials state: "We have only been able to provide a bandaid to a gaping wound....As federal and state participation declines, we find it more difficult to maintain our funding." New Orleans notes that funds have been cut and the city has not been able to replace them. Wichita has not been able to meet the major increase in demand because of diminishing federal and state support for programs. Officials there also cite "additional restrictions on federal funds (which) limit (the) program scope and numbers of participants eligible for the service. Melbourne officials explain how the demand has not been adequately met in their city: "Most organizations including our own have referred those they cannot help to other organizations, so that in the final analysis the clients just get a run-around. We see this most clearly in housing where we have been able to help less and less people -- just adding their name to the existing waiting list."

Chicago officials highlight the problem for other human services where scarce resources are concentrated on emergency needs: "Though the City has given priority to meeting emergency basic needs of individuals and families with reduced or constant federal resources, its ability to meet needs in such areas as child care, jobs and other social services has been severely curtailed." Dade County officials have provided detailed information on their inability to meet the increased demand for human services: "We have critically overcrowded obstetrical units at the County hospital; 30,000 (are) on the waiting list for public housing; there is (a) shortage of nursing home beds for (the) indigent; (there is a) waiting list for child care for Title XX clients...(and) for elderly services; deinstitution-

alized mental health patients (are) without adequate follow-up care;...(and there has been a) phase out of refugee assistance with no state general assistance."

Tacoma reports special problems in providing services to youth and families. Jackson reports increased waiting lists for family and mental health services. Nashville has had particular difficulty in meeting the increased demand for homemaker services, home-delivered meals, nursing home care for indigent chronically ill and elderly people and child day care. Services for children, families, and adults have been curtailed in Grand Rapids because there have been staffing reductions in the Department of Social Services at the same time that the requests for service have increased.

Demand for Other Human Services in 1984

On average, 54.6 percent of the cities indicate the demand for human services other than emergency ones has increased during 1984. On average, 3.8 percent of the cities state the demand has decreased. The remaining 41.6 percent of the cities feel the demand has remained the same since 1983.

The percentage of cities reporting increased demand for other human services varies with the type of program. At the low end of the scale, 35 percent of the cities feel the demand for refugee assistance increased and at the high end 72 percent of the cities state the demand for senior services increased. Other services for which the demand increased in at least one-half of the cities include health, employment and training, energy assistance, disability programs, mental health programs, youth services, and legal assistance. No cities report a decrease in demand in senior services. Employment and training and refugee assistance were the only services for which the demand decreased in ten percent or more of the cities. The table below lists the percentage of cities which indicate the demand for the various human services increased, stayed the same or decreased since 1983.

CHANGES IN DEMAND FOR HUMAN SERVICES SINCE 1983 (percentage of cities)

	Increased	Same	Decreased
Health	63.0%	35.6%	1.4%
Employment & Training	59.2	31.6	9.2
Senior Services	71.7	28.4	-0-
Energy Assistance	64.9	44.3	1.4
Weatherization	40.3	55.6	4.2
Child Day Care	69.3	28.0	2.6
Disability Programs	50.0	45.3	4.7
Mental Health Programs	60.0	37.2	2.9
Youth Service	57.5	39.7	2.7
Income Maintenance	51.1	4.7	5.6
Refugee Assistance	34.6	51.5	13.6
Legal Assistance	53.6	43.5	2.9
Recreation	36.4	62.3	1.4
Other Social Services	53.4	46.8	-0-

Only one city reports a "major decrease" in demand for three programs: child care, refugee assistance and recreation. On the other hand, 19 percent of the responding cities say there has been a major increase in the demand for legal services, 14 percent for mental health and 11 percent for refugee assistance.

- **Daly City** raises the problem that "the new poor are not versed in the system" and may have difficulty taking advantage of services available.

- **Tacoma** reports that changes in eligibility requirements are making needs go up and down, that there are waiting lists of individuals needing services, and the costs have increased for service delivery.

- **Seattle** officials have identified a number of services in which the need is not being met, including energy assistance for renters (since most low income people rent rather than own), transportation services for the elderly, services to Hispanic and refugee elderly and legal assistance. Co-payments and changes in Medicare and Medicaid have resulted in less insurance coverage for some people.

- In **Boston** local agencies are able to meet three percent of the demand for employment and training services, one-fourth of the demand for legal services, 30 percent of the demand for refugee assistance, and just less than half of the demand for mental health services.

- o **Milwaukee** also identifies employment as an area which continues to be a major problem.

- o **San Francisco** points out that state and federal funding did not fully meet the need prior to the cuts. "After the cuts in domestic programs, we have not been able to meet existing demands, much less meet new service demands."

- o **Downers Grove** officials say their city has seen cuts in federal funding for elderly and disabled people so that they are only able to meet one-half of the demand.

Funding for Other Human Services in 1984

In 40 percent of the cities the city government has been able to increase funding for programs affected by federal budget cuts. In 60 percent it has not. New York City allocated $46.2 million in city funds between FY82 and FY84 to help make up for federal cuts in day care and senior citizen programs funded by the Social Services Block Grant. Dade County has increased funding for child care, elderly services, health, and employment and training, but officials there are concerned that there may be funding reductions this year.

San Francisco has used local dollars to replace federal and state program cuts in health and income maintenance programs Berkeley has restored 10 percent of the cut in youth employment programs with city funds. Jacksonville and Lexington (KY) have provided additional city funding for senior services. Melbourne has increased its funding for child care, congregate dining and job training.

Several cities, including Providence and Tacoma, have used Community Development Block Grant or General Revenue Sharing funds to make up for budget cuts in human service programs. Indeed Seattle has allocated $600,000 in General Revenue Sharing funds for emergency services and provided funds for children's services and child abuse as well.

The majority of cities report that funding for other human service programs has not changed much since last year. Some cities, however, cite increases for selected programs. Funding for senior services and recreation increased in the largest number of responding cities since 1983, in 39 percent and 30 percent of the cities respectively. Other services for which funding increased in one-fourth or more of the cities include child day care, and youth services. Employment and training funding decreased in 46 percent of the reporting cities, refugee assistance in 28 percent, mental health program funding in 25 percent and legal assistance funding in 30 percent. The table below shows the percentage of responding cities which registered an increase, decrease or stayed the same in funding for human services.

CHANGES IN FUNDING FOR HUMAN SERVICES SINCE 1983 (percentage of cities)

	Increased	Same	Decreased
Health	18.8%	60.1%	20.3%
Employment & Training	18.2	36.4	45.5
Senior Services	39.4	49.3	11.3
Energy Assistance	22.7	60.0	17.3
Weatherization	16.2	70.6	13.2
Child Day Care	29.7	51.4	18.9
Disability Programs	19.4	62.5	17.7
Mental Health Programs	17.9	56.7	25.4
Youth Services	23.3	53.4	23.3
Income Maintenance	20.9	64.2	14.9
Refugee Assistance	9.4	62.5	28.1
Legal Assistance	13.4	56.7	29.9
Recreation	30.4	56.5	13.0
Other Social Services	24.5	53.1	22.4

Two cities identified differing roles for state government in funding human services. Boston officials feel that the "funding picture would be more dismal were it not for increases in state monies for human services." Chicago officials report that "reduced flexibility in the use of funds has resulted in reduced availability of funds for social services. In Illinois a state mandate to allocate 15 percent of the Community Services Block Grant for economic development activities is a specific example of this problem."

Hartford, Portland (ME) and New York City cite an increase in the general assistance caseload. Portland officials report that expenses have tripled over the past two years for this legally mandated program. New York City reports that because of the changes made through the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, 6,000 individuals eight to 20 years old were transferred from the AFDC caseload to the home relief (HR) caseload," which represents a direct shift in fiscal burden from the federal government to state and local governments," who share the cost of home relief equally. Termination of the CETA program also increased the city's HR caseload by approximately 10,000 recip-ients. Milwaukee officials are concerned about human services provided by the Housing Authority which are underfunded and will deteriorate or cease "without appropriate and adequate federal funding."

Human Services Gap

The majority of cities reporting describe a funding picture that has stabilized for the most part during 1984. For the same time, this majority reports increased demands for services. An analysis of cities citing discrepancies between demand and funding reveals there is a human services gap in several areas:

- Not one city reports that the demand decreased and funding increased during 1984.
- Many cities, however, say the demand increased and funding either decreased or stayed the same.
- The gap between funding and demand is greatest for employment and training programs, mental health programs; and legal services.
- The gap is least severe for recreation programs.

FEDERAL ACTION

City officials were asked to describe specific actions the federal government could undertake to help improve conditions in their city. A total of 189 suggestions covering a wide range of areas was offered by the 71 cities that responded to this open-ended question. Specific areas most frequently mentioned are job creation and training, permanent housing for low-income and elderly people, services to address the needs of homeless persons, food assistance, human services, economic development, and health care.

Job Creation and Training

The largest percentage (46 percent) of the cities responding feel the federal government should do more to promote jobs for low income people both in the private and public sectors. Milwaukee, for example, supports federal incentives for industry and business to employ people." Similarly, Wichita calls for "financial incentives to hire disadvantaged (people) as a requirement for business growth." Another city suggests that the federal government offer "subsidies to businesses to hire chronically unemployed persons." Several cities, including Lexington (KY), support Nashville's idea to "reactivate some form of public service employment as 'employer of last resort'." Melbourn calls for "a massive WPA-type program" to provide jobs and help "meet community needs such as paving roads and building needed bridges." Dade County also indicates the federal government should subsidize public works projects.

Seventy-six percent of the cities calling for job creation programs specifically mention the need for more job training and placement funds. Several feel it is important to expand the Job Training Partnership Act to reach more people in need, including the near poor or people living just above the poverty level.

Several cities specifically call for training programs to assist workers who have lost their jobs. One Southwestern city feels there should be more "retraining" of unemployed persons. Officials in Wichita believe the federal government should "assist in training workers displaced by economic, technical, and scientific changes." Auburn officials, on the other hand, call for "more jobs for people who are unskilled and not capable of training for skilled kinds of jobs. New technologies are leaving some people behind without prospects for (job) opportunities," they say.

Daly City officials suggest establishment of a program to help unemployed people find jobs through a computerized job

search: "Just as we have 12 Federal Reserve Banks, the government should create 12 Human Resource Banks." The program would "find jobs and relocate the unemployed anywhere that a employer will take them. These banks (would) provide shelter, if necessary, training, remedial education and health and child care services or help coordinate these services. There should be no shelterless people who want to work in this country)," officials there note.

Housing

Federal action to address housing needs of people in cities, particularly low-income and elderly, is called for by the next largest group of respondents. New York City officials, for example, support the development of a "federal low-income housing program to provide new construction and substantial rehabilitation of housing units." They note that "since the repeal of the Section 8 New Construction and Substantial Rehabilitation Program (with the exception of 14,000 rental units for elderly and disabled people), no new program has been authorized to provide permanent units solely for low income persons. "The shortage of low income housing in the city," they say, "has contributed to the recent increase in the number of homeless families and adults." Norwalk (CA) indicates more federally subsidized housing is needed as well as financial assistance on a one-time basis to prevent evictions or foreclosures in emergency situations." Another California city states that the federal government should "increase and preserve the Section 8 program. Housing vouchers," they emphasize, "are not an adequate substitute (for this program)." Among other cities calling for increased federal funds for housing assistance programs, particularly Section 8 and public housing, are Boston, Dade County, Hartford, Houston, Richland, and Rockville.

Homelessness

The need for federal initiatives to address shelter and other emergency needs of homeless people in cities is cited by many respondents. Dallas indicates that "government subsidies to feed, clothe, and house the homeless are needed to serve those who cannot qualify or have a difficult time being served through existing public assistance programs." A Midwestern city feels the federal government should provide more "emergency housing and funding to help keep a family together and be able to make it until they become employable." Officials from a California city support increased federal funding for shelter, adding that restrictions placed by the FEMA emergency food and shelter program on the amount that may be spent on physical expansion of facilities should be eliminated. Other cities that indicate the federal government should do more to help homeless persons include Boulder, Hartford, New York City, San Francisco, and San Mateo.

Food Assistance

A significant number of the respondents also call for federal efforts to improve the availability of food for those in need. Some specifically suggest changes in the food stamp program, including increasing the funding level. New York City supports restoration of "federal funding for cuts in the food stamp program which were authorized in the Omnibus budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 and raising the excess shelter deduction from $125 to $175. The increasing evidence of widespread hunger underscores the need to provide food assistance to the needy," officials there note. Greenwich believes program regulations should be revised so that high local welfare payments provided to help meet high rents do not disqualify people from receiving needed assistance. Scottsdale suggests the food stamp program should be run more efficiently.

Several cities also make recommendations regarding the federal government Surplus Food Commodities Program, including increasing the frequency of distribution. A significant number of cities also call for increased funding for emergency food assistance. Portsmouth reports that the money provided through the FEMA emergency food and shelter program has been "extremely helpful" and should be continued. Thornton officials report that although the city is generally doing relatively well the local food bank "does not know where the next dollar is coming from or how they can possibly feed everyone."

Human Services

The need for increased federal funding for human services in general is identified by many cities responding to the question. Several of them specifically mention that additional funds should be provided through the Social Services and Community Services Block Grants. Dade County calls for increased federal support of human services, particularly those serving very young, elderly and disabled people in need. The District of Columbia mentions the need for increased funding levels for the Community Services and Social Services Block Grants. New York City supports the restoration of funds for the Social Services Block Grant, "which remains the largest direct federal source of support for child care." Seattle officials suggest changing "budget priorities so that adequate resources can be made available for needed social services, while reducing the (national) deficit. Defense spending should be reduced and more money should be put into low income housing, nutrition programs, maternal and child health programs, child care, mental health, substance abuse and job training programs." A Midwestern city states that funding for human services programs should be increased and urges the federal government to "stop the attack on those programs that are really needed" in cities.

Health

Many respondents as well indicate that the federal government should be doing more to address health needs of people in cities through increased funding for health and mental health services, and through program changes. Nashville officials, for example, say policy and funding restrictions of the Medicaid program should be eased. Greenwich suggests the Medicare program be changed to cover home health care and homemaker services. Another New England city has mentioned the need for additional health clinics to serve poor people. Support for a national health insurance plan is also mentioned by several cities.

Economic Development

The need for continued and increased support of federal programs that assist city economic development efforts is reported by a significant number of respondents. Specific programs frequently mentioned include General Revenue Sharing, Community Development Block Grants, and Urban Development Action Grants. Trenton recommends the development of a "comprehensive urban aid program which would primarily address itself to rehabilitating existing housing, developing new housing, revitalizing urban industry, and restoring essential linkages with suburban communities."

Interest Rates

Some cities specifically indicate that conditions in cities could be improved by the federal government lowering the national deficit and personal interest rates. A Midwestern city official states: "The Administration is hurting the national recovery by not doing so. Many families are unable to qualify for loans to buy houses, automobiles and other 'big ticket' items because high interest rates increase monthly payments to a point (at which) they cannot afford (them)." High interest rates, the official adds, are also "hurting the aircraft industry in the Wichita area, causing lay-offs." Tacoma officials believe that "as long as the interest rates remain high and employment does not improve dramatically, conditions (in cities) will not improve."

Other Issues

Other areas more frequently mentioned by responding cities include the need for additional funding for day care services and increased funding to help improve transportation services for people in cities, particularly low-income and elderly persons. Several cities including New York City and Portland (ME), suggest that AFDC payment levels should be increased. Other cities share concerns regarding the SSI program. Nashville officials, for example, state that review of SSI eligibility should be done "in a more humane and realistic way." Hartford believes the federal government should develop "realistic standards of disability for

the SSI and SSA programs." Several other cities call for increased support for energy assistance. La Mirada, for example, supports an increase of at least 50 percent in funding available through the energy assistance program. The District of Columbia indicates "the federal government should ensure multi-year funding for the Low Income Home Emergency Assistance Program, and base the allotment not only on population size but (on) the escalating cost of energy."

City officials responding to this open-ended question mention a wide-range of other specific actions they believe the federal government should undertake to help improve conditions in cities. They include:

- relaxing performance standards of the Job Training Partnership Act;
- changing block-grant programs to ensure that more funds go directly to localities;
- taking over income support and food and nutrition programs and making adjustments for inflation and poverty level standards;
- increasing unemployment benefits;
- targetting more funds for those in need;
- paying taxes on federal property in cities; and
- increasing funding for programs that assist women and single heads of households.

APPENDIX: Characteristics Of The 83 Cities Responding To The Survey

City	1980 Population	1980 Poverty Rate	June Unemployment Rate 1983	1984
Albuquerque, NM	341,978	12.4	8.7	6.2
Anaheim, CA	226,467	7.7	8.0	4.7
Anchorage, AK	194,675	7.4	7.7	7.6
Arlington, MA	48,219	5.5	NA	NA
Arvada, CO	84,576	3.9	5.5	4.1
Auburn, ME	23,128	12.5	NA	NA
Aurora, CO	184,372	5.4	5.6	4.2
Baldwin Park, CA	50,554	15.2	13.0	10.8
Baltimore, MD	774,113	22.9	9.2	6.9
Bayonne, NJ	65,047	9.6	11.0	7.4
Berkeley, CA	103,479	21.0	9.2	6.0
Bloomington, IN	51,646	23.3	8.5	7.0
Boston, MA	560,847	20.2	8.8	5.4
Boulder, CO	76,685	16.3	6.0	4.4
Bowie, MD	33,695	1.7	NA	NA
Chicago, IL	2,997,155	20.3	12.6	9.4
Clearwater, FL	85,450	8.6	6.4	4.5
Columbia, MO	62,061	17.5	5.3	3.8
Dade County, FL	1,625,979	15.0	10.2	7.6
Dallas, TX	943,848	14.2	6.4	4.0
Daly City, CA	78,519	7.0	9.8	6.5
Des Moines, IA	191,506	10.6	8.9	6.6
Detroit, MI	1,138,717	21.9	19.8	13.3 *
Downers Grove, IL	39,274	2.5	NA	NA
Evansville, IN	130,275	12.2	14.0	10.6
Fairfield, CT	54,849	4.4	5.1	3.7 *
Gardena, CA	45,165	9.2	NA	NA
Grand Rapids, MI	182,774	13.5	14.7	11.1 *
Green Bay, WI	87,899	9.6	10.4	7.3
Greenwich, CT	59,578	3.2	3.2	2.4 *
Hartford, CT	136,334	25.2	7.7	6.1
Hayward, CA	94,167	9.2	9.7	6.4
Highland Park, IL	30,611	2.1	NA	NA
Hoffman Estates, IL	38,258	2.8	NA	NA
Houston, TX	1,725,617	12.7	11.1	6.9
Jackson, MI	39,739	15.9	NA	NA
Jacksonville, FL	556,370	16.0	8.3	6.0
La Mirada, CA	40,986	4.9	NA	NA
Las Cruces, NM	45,086	20.3	NA	NA
Lexington, KY	207,668	13.5	5.3	4.6
Livermore, CA	48,349	4.4	NA	NA
Los Angeles, CA	3,022,247	16.4	11.3	9.4
Lynchburg, VA	66,743	13.1	5.8	4.5
Medford, MA	58,076	7.6	6.6	4.1
Melbourne, FL	46,536	11.9	NA	NA
Miami Beach, FL	96,298	17.6	12.0	8.9
Milwaukee, WI	631,509	13.8	12.8	8.4
Minneapolis, MN	369,161	13.5	7.1	5.6

City	1980 Population	1980 Poverty Rate	June Unemployment Rate 1983	1984
Nashville, TN	455,252	12.6	7.1	5.4
New Orleans, LA	564,561	26.4	10.0	8.4
New Rochelle, NY	70,794	8.0	7.1	4.4
New York, NY	7,086,096	20.0	8.9	10.0
Niles, IL	30,363	3.2	NA	NA
Norfolk, VA	266,874	20.7	5.5	4.6
Norwalk, CA	85,232	10.5	10.3	8.5
Norwich, CT	38,074	12.6	NA	NA
Oxnard, CA	115,657	12.3	14.1	10.4
Phoenix, AZ	824,230	11.1	7.7	4.1
Pleasanton, CA	35,160	3.5	NA	NA
Ponce, PR	207,500	62.7	30.9	26.3
Portland, ME	61,572	15.4	7.1	4.4
Portsmouth, VA	105,807	19.2	7.1	5.5
Providence, RI	155,711	20.4	9.3	7.6
Richland, WA	33,578	5.0	NA	NA
Riverside, CA	174,023	11.3	12.1	8.2
Rockville, MD	43,811	4.9	NA	NA
San Antonio, TX	819,021	20.9	6.9	5.0
San Diego, CA	915,956	12.4	9.1	5.5
San Francisco, CA	691,637	13.7	9.5	7.0
San Leandro, CA	63,952	4.8	7.5	4.9
San Mateo, CA	77,561	5.8	6.0	3.9
Santa Barbara, CA	74,542	11.0	6.4	4.1
Scottsdale, AZ	88,364	5.6	5.5	2.9
Seattle, WA	490,077	11.2	10.4	8.5
Tacoma, WA	161,351	14.1	13.0	11.4
Thornton, CO	40,343	6.4	NA	NA
Trenton, NJ	92,124	21.2	12.7	7.5
Tucson, AZ	352,455	14.7	9.3	4.4
Tustin, CA	32,073	6.6	NA	NA
Warwick, RI	87,123	6.6	8.2	6.2
Washington, DC	633,425	18.6	11.1	8.9
West Covina, CA	80,094	5.3	8.0	6.6
Wichita, KS	288,723	10.2	8.3	5.9

* FIGURES FOR APRIL 1984